

Policy Committee Decision Report

Title of Report:	Development of the Major Events Plan: Phase 1
Date of Decision:	31 st October 2024
Report To:	Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee
Report Of:	Diana Buckley, Director Economy, Skills and Culture, City Futures
Report Author:	Emma France, Service Manager, Marketing Sheffield

Executive Summary: Sheffield has many strengths as a destination for major events and is already a city of major events and festivals. The expertise and experience within the Council's event teams and Marketing Sheffield and across city and business partners has resulted in a diverse and high impact event programme for the city. The Council has a strong track record of supporting events over many years, both financially and operationally.

We are now taking a more strategic approach to Major Events, to build upon our strengths, address our weaknesses and challenges, as well as looking at how we support events with greater investment and different funding models.

Work is underway on a Major Events Plan and this report considers work so far (Phase 1) and the options to be considered to move forwards (Phase 2).



Council Plan outcomes:

A Major Events Plan would support the Council Plan's outcome "A vibrant and diverse culture offer that animates and inspires Sheffield".

It is also central to the successful delivery of existing and new strategies and plans including:

- Growth Plan
- Destination Management Plan
- Leisure & Sports Strategy
- Culture Strategy

Events are integral to the success of all these strategies which seek to use events footfall and reputation as a fundamental part of growing the sector and economy.

Policy Committee remit:

This report is to be considered by the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee as its remit includes Major and City Centre events.

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? YES

The appendix is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Recommendations:

The Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee is recommended to:

1. Agree the principles and foundations of the Major Events Plan as outlined in this report.
2. Agree that work should begin to formally explore the funding mechanisms and Council seed corn funding models to facilitate the Major Events Plan.
3. Agree that work continues to refine the 10-year events pipeline to a 'ready to bid/commission position'.
4. Agree that we begin meaningful engagement with city stakeholders and experts in this field to gain expertise, advice and feedback on the plan and approach.

Financial Implications: Yes: Approved by: Jonny McQuillan

Legal Implications: Yes: Approved by: Gemma Beecroft

Equality and Inclusion Implications: Yes: Approved by: Richard Bartlett

Initial Equalities Impact Assessment completed with EIA number: ID2866

Climate Change Implications: No. Approved by: Kathryn Warrington

Background Papers: November 2023 EDS Committee report on Major Events

Appendices: Confidential – Strategic Major Events Financials and Pipeline

1. Background to the issue

Sheffield has had much success in bidding for and hosting major events, and the city has an enviable reputation in doing so. Events are well connected with our plans such as the developing Growth Plan. However, our current approach comes with some challenges which include:

- Reactive approach rather than a strategic plan to maximise return on investment
- A need for more clarity and transparency over how decisions are made regarding which events the Council should support and why
- Pressures on Council finances and historical reliance on the Council as the primary funder for major events (including limited private sector investment)
- The lack of a single funding pot available for strategic investments in major events which leverages partner and private co-investment
- Limited resources to maximise wrap around and legacy activity
- Limited resources to accurately measure the true economic and media profile of major events
- Taking a more reactive approach leads to funding requests at short notice, and doesn't always allow for social impact programmes to be developed and doesn't always allow for strategic partnerships to be developed.

A Major Events Plan would provide clear ambition, direction, a development programme, and prioritised action plan for transforming Sheffield as a destination for home-grown, curated, commissioned, and peripatetic events. It would look to tackle the above weaknesses and threats.

2. Proposal

2.1 Background to this proposal

At Economic Development and Skills (EDS) Policy Committee in November 2023 we looked at the Council's existing events plan and how events were commissioned and funded. The EDS Policy Committee approved the development of a Major Events Plan and noted that future updates and decisions would be brought back to Committee.

2.2 Sheffield is already a city of major events and festivals.

Sheffield hosts some fantastic events (including some of the largest events in the UK such as the Tour De France, Women's Euros and Rugby League World Cup). We have recently been involved in some of the most high-profile bidding processes in the UK (e.g. Eurovision) and hosted national and internationally significant events (e.g. Tour of Britain, International Para Table Tennis, the International Coeliac Disease Symposium and the British

Association of Paediatric Surgeons). We have delivered exceptional events at very short notice including the MOBO Awards and MOBO Fringe.

The expertise and experience within the Council's event teams and Marketing Sheffield – developed over the past two decades – has resulted in a diverse and high impact Council event programme and a strong track record of supporting events over many years, both financially and operationally. Our expertise, distinctive venues, and partnership working, enable the City to host major events of all types and sizes.

Alongside the Council's teams, the City has networks of festival organisers, event producers, venue operators and city partners, including the universities, that bring even more experience, expertise and ideas into the city's events programme. Festivals like Off the Shelf, Doc fest, No Bounds, Tramlines, Festival of the Mind and the Children's Media festival (the list could go on), would not exist without the energy of the sector, investment by partners and co-working with the Council.

The economic impact of events is significant for the City; events and festivals continue to help us build our reputation and allow others to see and experience Sheffield on a different scale, in different ways. Our Council Plan, Growth Plan, visitor economy, sport/leisure, and culture strategies are now in place. Events, and crucially hosting more and more varied events, are integral to the success of these strategies which seek to use the visitor footfall, income generated and reputational benefits as a fundamental part of growing the sector and economy.

In developing this plan, we have identified strengths and opportunities across sport, business (conference) and culture:

<p>Sport</p>	<p>The largest of these events appeal to and attract international audiences and generate extensive media coverage.</p> <p>The participants, organisers, and spectators create an additional injection of income into Sheffield's economy via their expenditure in local coffee shops, bars, restaurants, shops, hotels, taxis, and other businesses during their trips.</p> <p>In addition to the media profile and economic benefits generated, major sporting events create community and social benefits such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging local people to be inspired to participate in sport and physical activity (which has health and well-being benefits). - Opportunities for local people to volunteer and officiate at the events. - Creating inspiration and pathways for local people to move from local grassroots and community sport and
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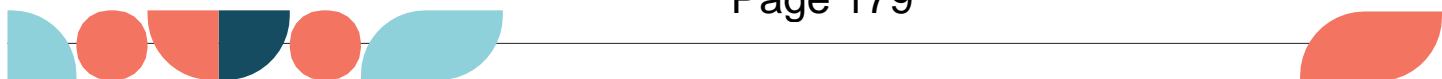
	<p>physical activity to elite sport. This is particularly the case in Sheffield given the size of grassroots and community sport and physical activity, the quality of community and elite sport and leisure venues and facilities, and the number of National Governing Bodies.</p>
Business	<p>Delegates attending conferences, meetings and other business events typically spend more per trip than leisure visitors such as holiday-makers.</p> <p>As mentioned, in 2023 there were 823,000 conference and meetings delegates in Sheffield. The average spend per delegate was £139 per trip. As with major sporting and cultural events, this expenditure supports local coffee shops, bars, restaurants, shops, hotels, taxis, and other businesses. Conference tourism can occur outside of the peak holiday periods throughout the year. This can support business productivity at traditionally quieter periods of tourism demand. Many conference delegates also extend their stay or visit in the future.</p> <p>Major conference and other business events can generate national and international media coverage. This media coverage can help change perceptions of destinations and further enhance their appeal as places to live, work and visit.</p> <p>Conferences showcase and help grow local and regional businesses and sectors. There is also an emerging trend of a link between conference/business tourism and the creation of research centres. Sheffield has been particularly successful with this. These conferences showcase Sheffield's expertise to the rest of the world, enhancing links with the two universities, and help grow places like the Olympic Legacy Park (as home to international health, wellbeing, and medical technology research centres such as the Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre).</p>
Culture	<p>These types of cultural events contribute to Sheffield's vibrant events and festivals sector and the growth thereof. Sheffield is synonymous with festivals. Festival programming already takes the City's story to a national and international audience. The local economy also benefits through visitor expenditure in local businesses.</p> <p>The physical infrastructure and venue asset base lends itself to multi-venue, multi-day festival style events (e.g., DocFest, Tramlines, Off the Shelf, Crossed Wires, Festival of the Outdoors, and No Bounds Festival). Sheffield is excellent at</p>



	<p>delivering wrap around 'festival style' programming to some major events such as The 26th MOBO Awards in 2024, Women's EURO 2022, which enhances the cultural and community benefits of these events.</p> <p>Large-scale, curated cultural events and large-scale home-grown cultural events showcase Sheffield's culture to the rest of the world, building the City's unique reputation, and creating a willingness for people to visit. They are animators of destination attractiveness (vibrancy) not just as a place to visit but for work, study, to live or to invest in. They allow us to engage more diverse audiences and communities in cultural and festival activity.</p>
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Event Organisers and event experts reflect on Sheffield:

<p><i>Sheffield has been a supportive partner and host to UK Sport funded major events over the last decade. Their commitment to not only staging the very best events but maximising their impact on the local community has enhanced the city's reputation through the UK as a recognised host of the very best major international sporting events, we see them as a key host city looking into the future.</i></p> <p>Esther Britten, Deputy Director & Head of Events, UK Sport</p>
<p><i>Sheffield holds a special place in my heart after the incredible experience of hosting the MOBO Awards there earlier this year. The city welcomed us with open arms, and we saw first-hand the immense passion for music and culture that thrives here. From the vibrant local scene to the wealth of talent emerging, particularly among Black artists, Sheffield is a true melting pot of creativity. It's a city that embraces inclusivity and diversity, which is essential for Black musicians to have their voices heard and artistry celebrated.</i></p> <p><i>The impact of the MOBO Awards in Sheffield was profound. Beyond celebrating Black excellence, it brought the community together in a way that left a lasting legacy. Our MOBO Fringe programme, with over 3,500 participants, created deep connections within the local music and arts scene. In partnership with Sheffield City Council, we hosted events like the Talent Showcase, Winter Garden Spotlight, MOBO Industry Panels, and a Schools Programme that showcased the rich creativity within the city.</i></p> <p><i>What's been particularly gratifying is seeing how the benefits of these initiatives went beyond music. The council's impact report showed a real social impact, especially among young people. From the time we announced that MOBO was coming to Sheffield in December 2023 until the awards ceremony in February 2024, school attendance improved and there was a noticeable reduction in suspensions. The city's</i></p>



Children Services Directorate highlighted this as a direct result of the MOBO Awards and the surrounding music programmes, which gave young people a sense of purpose and belonging.

One standout moment for me was seeing Sheffield's schoolchildren come together to perform former MOBO Award winner Stormzy's "Blinded by Your Grace" on the morning of the awards. That performance truly captured the spirit of the city. Economically, But what resonated most was the sense of unity and empowerment it sparked, especially for the younger generation.

Sheffield's music scene is flourishing, and it has incredible potential to continue nurturing the next wave of Black artists. The response from the city showed just how powerful music can be in bringing communities together and we're so excited to do the same in Newcastle for MOBO Awards 2025. I'm confident Sheffield will remain a key player in shaping the future of Black music in the UK, and I'd love to see MOBO return to build on this success in the future.

Kanya King CBE, Founder and CEO MOBO Group

2.3 Our current position is challenging

Although outwardly our reputation is good, there is more we can do to strengthen our strategic planning and decision making through the production of this Major Events Plan.

Our aim is to deliver a longer term, planned and resourced approach with a clear pipeline of events (which is already developing and strong). We will present a clear ambition, direction, development programme, and prioritised action plan for transforming our approach to events.

2.4 The events landscape continues to be increasingly competitive

Events are big business in Sheffield and across the UK. Without an enhanced strategic approach to targeting and bidding for events Sheffield could take a backward step at a time when the sector is getting increasingly competitive.

There is increasing competition amongst destinations for high impact and high-profile peripatetic events. Accommodation Business Improvement Districts ('ABIDs') are business-led initiatives that are being implemented and considered by some destinations. The revenue from ABIDs gives places a competitive advantage by generating partnership approaches, private sector buy in and additional funds for destination marketing and management, including supporting the growth of their major event portfolios.

In Sheffield we have strong and long-term relationships with organisations like UK Sport, Visit Britain and ICCA (International Congress & Convention Association) which we must capitalise on quickly as they move forward on their plans, to maintain our position in the UK Events space.

South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) have a renewed interest in supporting events e.g. 26th MOBO Awards, Crossed Wires and the Tour of Britain. These events support the South Yorkshire Destination Management Plan within which Sheffield plays a central role.

2.5 Our aims and objectives for this work

In developing a Major Events Plan we want to achieve:

1. Transformation of Sheffield's major events programme with a step-change in strategic planning and decision making, and the amplification the positive economic, social, community impacts from events.
2. Mutually beneficial public/private partnerships that will deliver event opportunities, shared investments and funding, and shared success.
3. Effective and efficient governance that will ensure transparent decision-making based on clearly defined strategic, financial, economic and other criteria to help the Council make accountable, evidence-based, and proactive decisions that will maximise the value for money and return on investment on Council and private sector funding.
4. A Council single funding pot available for investment in major events, whether that be bidding for peripatetic sporting and business events, commissioning cultural and other events, and investment to support major events in Sheffield. Enabling this public sector funding as 'seed corn' funding to leverage additional public sector and private sector contributions and achieve more secure funding for events. We need to investigate a range of potential sponsorship, co-investment and partner funding arrangements. This will include learning from existing funding mechanisms in use in other cities.
5. Clear decision making and clarification of what we support and why; recognising the different types of events and the different benefits generated This will include (1) major events which create tangible additional benefits for Sheffield's economy and profile nationally and around the world, and (2) events that generate community and social benefits at neighbourhood and local levels.

2.6 The Proposal: Principles and Foundations for the Major Events Plan

Creating a streamlined categorisation for events

We are grouping events into 4 categories as shown in the table below. The city is receiving more and more interest in these areas, particularly the top two, which we need to be able to capitalise on

Type of event

Rotating national or international profile event: an event that rotating around other destinations that we bid for to come to Sheffield for one or more years. An example of this could be MOBO Awards or the European Figure skating Championships.

Sheffield based national/international profile event: an event based in Sheffield which does not go elsewhere (or have the potential to) but has national or international audience/reputational reach. An example of this would be DocFest or Crossed Wires.

New/incubator events with the potential to become events with national/international profile: These are events which have potential to grow into events that drive national or international profile but need seed funding or wrap around support to achieve this. An example of this could be Luna Festival or Lick of Paint Street Art Festival.

Local Seasonal neighbourhood events: These are events in the community creating a sense of place, pride and vibrancy. An example of this could be Weston Park May Fayre.

2.7 Decision making principles

We have developed 5 key principles to add clarity and transparency to our decision making. Making it clear what we support and why and recognising the different types of events and the different benefits generated. We want to test and develop these principles with partners and expertise in field.

1. **Economic Impact:** increases volume or value of the visitor economy, supports a key business/ investment priority, supports supply chain/local spend, brings in investment
2. **Brand and Reputation:** achieves national and/or international press/reach, links to inclusive events programming and REC outcomes.
3. **Community benefits:** increase in footfall to a particular area, clear contribution to pride of place, community engagement (volunteers/charity element/increased physical activity)
4. **Inclusion and diversity:** significant diversity in organisation makeup/ audience focus/ programming, accessibility
5. **Supports key strategies:** Link to a cultural strategy priority, a Destination Management Plan priority, a Leisure & Sports Strategy/Move More priority, or has benefits beyond Sheffield into South Yorkshire. Must be delivered with methods that support sustainability, the reduction of waste, plastic and carbon – supporting our objective to be net zero by 2023.

2.8 The process of creating a Major Events Plan

In Phase 1 we want to start meaningful engagement with key partners and experts in the field to gain expertise, advise and feedback and to identify future event opportunities. This will be vital in ensuring the pipeline of events is right for the city and well positioned to attract wider investment.

This could include but is not limited to UK Sport, Arts Council England, Yorkshire Sport Foundation, Sport England, Visit Britain, SYMCA, Sheffield Bid, Hospitality South Yorkshire, ASM Global, Everybody's Active, University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield Chamber of Commerce.

2.9 Funding for Major Events

2.9.1 Current funding model

The Council currently contributes funding towards events from a range of budget areas.

This includes yearly cash limits within existing business units (cross department) plus one-off opportunity funding made up of income generated, leveraged support through grants and one off funding for major event opportunities.

This breakdown and an outline of the total amount spent by the Council over the last four years since Covid is detailed in **Confidential Appendix 1**.

2.10 A bold and ambitious programme for the future

An indication of items from our pipeline of Major Events that Sheffield could secure as part of a strategic approach is included in **Confidential Appendix 1**.

3 How does this decision contribute to the Council Plan?

3.1 Council Plan outcome

3.1.1 The Council Plan outcome relevant to this decision is:

[A creative and prosperous city full of culture, learning, and innovation](#)

3.2 People – Prosperity - Planet

3.2.1 People:



Events contribute to a thriving city economy focused on people. Events provide real and direct opportunities for people in Sheffield to be part of everything the city has to offer.

3.2.2 Prosperity:

Events make the most of Sheffield's assets and showcase them to the rest of the world as well as encouraging our communities to experience them by attendance at an event. Events help businesses to thrive and encourage more investment which results in more people in jobs in hospitality and in the wider events supply chain.

3.2.3 Planet:

We will encourage event organisers to minimise environmental impact through initiatives such as the ISLA framework (weareisla.co.uk), using local suppliers and public transport. This will be part of our testing principles for supporting events.

3.3 City Goals

The Major Events Plan will link with the City Goals area of 'A creative and Entrepreneurial Sheffield'.

In particular, goal 3: enable all creatives to thrive, from artists & musicians, to scientists & technologists, sharing and learning from one another, as part of an enriching cultural and creative economy.

This will be achieved through a broad events programme.

4 What community or partner engagement has been undertaken and how has it informed the proposal?

There has not yet been any consultation specifically regarding this report. As part of the Destination Management Plan, events were a major part of the consultation carried out. Events also featured in the consultation around the upcoming new Culture Strategy.

See section 2.8 above on our plans for engagement with partners and stakeholders following committee support.

5 What alternative options did we consider?

5.1 Alternative Option 1:

We maintain the status quo and continue looking at events as one offs. This leads to "late" decision making and funding requests at short notice, doesn't always allow for social impacts programmes to be developed and doesn't



always allow for strategic partnerships to be developed. It leads to the lack of a longer-term strategy and risks Sheffield being left behind as other cities advance in this competitive marketplace.

5.2 Alternative Option 2:

We could choose not to invest in events. It would be unlikely that the funding gap would be met by other stakeholders without the Council taking a lead with national organisations and mobilising city infrastructure. The number and calibre of events hosted in the city would reduce. We would lose Sheffield's place as a competitive key host city for events. We would likely not achieve the same level of growth from events as outlined in our key strategies. Businesses would suffer from reduced footfall.

6 How has equality, diversity and inclusion been actively considered?

We have recognised that our current programme of events needs to be more diverse. We have examples of excellence e.g. DocFest and the 26th MOBO Awards but we must build on this for the longer-term programme.

One of our 5 testing principles against which every event will be considered is:

- Principle 4: **Inclusion and diversity:** significant diversity in organisation makeup/ audience focus/ programming, accessibility.

We are also already aware that our current Major Events have significant social impact for residents and communities in Sheffield and we want to be able to build on this:

Event Name	Year	Attendance	Social Impact Outputs
UEFA Women's European Football Championships	2022	120,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9,560 more people playing (recreational football) - 1,405 playing competitive football - 7,786 more playing football in schools - 18,697 in total - 71 new teams - 30 new female coaches - 29 new female referees
Rugby League World Cup	2022	40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of the Parson Cross Sports Hub - New home for Sheffield Hawks, increase in 350+ -players - Plans for senior men's and women's teams - Sheffield Eagles established 2 x women's teams, 2 x wheelchair teams and 1 x learning disability team - Home to 7 x local football teams - 60+ coaching and referees recruited
GB Boxing World Series	2024	3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community use tickets (FURD, DESA, young carers, local boxing clubs, fostering agency) - 2 x local boxing clubs invited to meet the boxers, sparring, coaching - Come and try it session with GB Coaches

			- Boxing Activator Course; schools staff trained to deliver basic boxing coaching sessions
26 TH MOBO Awards	2024	10,000	- 3 x community-based programmes (spotlight, mobilise, showcase) - Schools music programmes over 4000 children - 500 community use tickets to over 40 community groups - Over 50 local artists performed on the crucible stage
Tour of Britain Cycle Race	2024	10,000	- 40 x schools invited to line the route - Legacy programme delivered by 14 community-based organisations - Over 250 people attended the legacy events, some have never ridden a bike before!
Olympic Legacy in Action	2024	3,000	- 3,000 participants - 26 activities - Delivered by 44 organisations
IIHA Women's Olympic Ice Hockey Qualifying Event	2024	6,000	- 400 children to be invited - Rotation of activities. 200 ice skating & 200 ball hockey/fundamental skills at EISS (Split 100 per activity) - Respective countries flags to be provided to the children - 10 X schools attending - Less than 12 hours from "offer to schools" to allocation of spaces met

A full EIA has been deemed not necessary for Phase 1. However, given our strategic approach to culture and events in the city we will look at the Culture Strategy and other plans and strategies and their EIAs to understand what the gaps are and how they can be addressed through the Major Events Plan. A SMART action plan that harmonises the equality objectives developed through these plans and strategies will help identify specific opportunities to target our resources through the Major Events Plan so it can have most impact. Since these plans and strategies are already aligned with the City Goals and the Council Plan it should also help us have an

7 Financial and Commercial Implications

The Council currently contributes funding towards events from a range of budget areas. This includes a Strategic Events Budget for Commissioning, the World Snooker budget area, operational staffing in the Events team, and bid support from the Marketing Sheffield Conference team. See Confidential Appendix 1 for more details.

Future funding will require moving to a longer-term funding model; using public sector as 'pump priming' funding to leverage additional public sector and private sector contributions, commercialisation and achieve more secure funding for events. To explore this further we will need to look at a range of mechanisms, including:

- Maximising commercialisation of events.

- Recognising how the public sector can contribute more sustainable seed funding.
- Grant opportunities for events.
- Opportunities for sponsorship or philanthropic donations.
- Learning from existing funding mechanisms in use in other cities
- Looking at funding opportunities from the new operator contracts for our leisure and entertainment venues.

This will be an area of focus for this piece of work if the principles in Phase 1 are approved and the team are able to move forwards into Phase 2 of development of a Major Events Plan with appropriate financial planning and business models included.

There will be resourcing implications of enacting this proposal, with a range of staff across the Council required to commit time towards its delivery. This will need to be funded from existing budgets.

This report is not at this stage committing any additional funding to events from the Council budget. Any change to the events budgets will follow the budget setting process informed by an appropriate business plan.

8 Legal Implications

The Council has a number of powers under Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972 to encourage persons to their area for health purposes, or to hold conferences, trade fairs and exhibitions. The Council also have a power to provide facilities or encourage others to provide facilities for such conferences, trade fairs etc.

Under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may also arrange for the doing of or contribute towards the expenses of doing of the provision of various entertainments.

The development of a Major Events Plan, as set out in this report, will support the Council in delivering the above powers.

Any event agreements or licences should include appropriate contractual terms to ensure that the Council's liability is limited and that any risks are managed and mitigated. A properly planned for event will allow for bespoke drafting, negotiation and management of risk (such as liability and insurance) in a planned and considered way and can be discussed and documented early in the Council's event planning process.

If there is likely to be any confidential or commercially sensitive information to be disclosed in any early discussions with venues, promoters and private sector

organisations as part of the major events plan, this should be only be undertaken after a confidentiality agreement has been signed by the parties concerned.

Any further decisions, for example in relation to grants or commissioning will be taken in accordance with the Constitution.

9 Climate and Environmental Implications

We will encourage event organisers to minimise environmental impact through initiatives such as the ISLA framework (weareisla.co.uk), using local suppliers and public transport. This will be part of our testing principles for supporting events.

One of the key principles for testing events will include how an event connects with other Council objectives, including net zero by 2030.

In identifying events, we will adhere to the climate considerations in the Council's Advertising and Sponsorship policy.

10 Other implications

There are no other implications.

11 Reasons for decision

We are making the recommendations in this report because:

- Events are a powerful economic and community tool to create vibrancy, visitors, pride of place and community engagement.
- We need a Major Events Plan to capitalise on the city's ambitions for major events in Sheffield. This needs some agreed principles and foundations and a shared understanding of what the Plan will achieve for Sheffield.
- We need agreement to formally explore the funding mechanisms and business models required to properly resource the Major Events Plan and refine our 10-year events pipeline to be 'bid/commissioning-ready'.
- We need agreement to begin consultation and engagement with key experts in the field, partners and stakeholders to develop and write the Major Events Plan.

